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MEDICAL UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH CAROLINA
171 Ashley Avenue
Charleston, South Carolina 29425-2503

June 14, 1990

Fran Wheeler, Ph.D.
Center for Health Promotion
SC Department of Health, Education, and Environmental Control
2600 Bull Street
Columbia, SC 29201

Dear Dr. Wheeler:

On behalf of the Medical University of South Carolina, and on behalf of the Division of Prevention and Control of the Hollings Oncology Center, I am pleased to declare our strong support of the tobacco-use reduction effort, and our firm commitment to the goals of the SC Coalition on Smoking and Tobacco Control, and those of Project ASSIST (American Stop-Smoking Intervention Study).

As you know our epidemiology group has been associated with the conduct of risk factor surveillance projects in the state, and is aware of the magnitude of the cigarette-smoking problem in South Carolina residents. We are concerned about the increase in smoking by young females, and the persistence of high smoking levels in blue collar males, especially black males. Our impression is that our residents are not responding to national smoking-cessation education programs as well as residents of other parts of the nation.

As an institution the Medical University of SC has been not only supportive in a program development sense, but it has set an example for its employees. For three years the MUSC Hospital has been a non-smoking area, and in the spring of 1990 the entire working place was made a no-smoking area, with active enforcement. It has been involved on the program side as well. Through the Prevention and Control Division of the Hollings Oncology Center, MUSC is planning a program of cancer risk factor reduction. The Division has both primary and secondary prevention units which will be active in community outreach, and it has supporting units for surveillance/evaluation and resource development. Primary prevention activities will be the principal responsibility of the Trident Health District, the local health department for the three county Charleston area. The District has strong smoking cessation programs and we will build on their strengths and depend on their leadership, even though they will be working as partners in the Oncology Center. Likewise, we have as collaborators the staff and volunteers of COBRA (Council on Better Racial Assurance) who enjoy access to the black neighborhoods and black-oriented media of the Charleston area. MUSC has responsibility for the secondary prevention side and will use screening results to reinforce primary prevention education.

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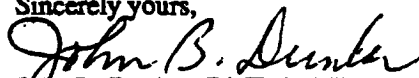
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We have other programs with considerable potential for partnership activities. The Agromedicine Program, with strong connections to the Clemson University Extension Services, has an established and popular health promotion program for SC farm families. The Area Health Education Consortium is active in CME for practicing physicians, and it has a unique minority outreach component. Finally, the Department of Family Medicine has developed a network of practicing primary care physicians interested in preventive services for their patients. One particularly popular effort is that devoted to promoting smoking-cessation in their private patients. They are assisted in this pursuit by scientist-physicians of the Department whose developmental studies on this theme have been supported by the National Cancer Institute.

We will collaborate with DHEC and ACS as we cooperate now with Trident Health District and COBRA, based on playing to the strengths of the partners with dedication to the best of quality and to successful outcomes. We have worked with DHEC and with ACS and are familiar with their strengths and weaknesses as regards community programming and implementation. Both have demonstrated ability to envision, plan, implement, and administer programs of state-wide scope and of long duration. These critical skills will be much in demand as we launch this milestone effort.

Sincerely yours,


John B. Dunbar, DMD, DrPH
Director, Prevention and Control
Hollings Oncology Center

cc: Dr. James Edwards, President

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